

CRIME STATISTICS —  
AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE

**32. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Minister for Police:**

Before I ask my question, I would like to let the member for Dawesville know that I will be using “T” in this question.

I refer to this government’s commitment to drive down crime across Western Australia including reducing juvenile offending, which has been demonstrated by this government’s funding for the Armadale youth intervention program. Can the minister update the house on the recent crime statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Western Australia Police Force?

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:**

I thank the member for Armadale for his question. I also congratulate him on his personal commitment to the Armadale youth intervention project, something that he has championed for quite some time. Crime prevention is a very important area to focus on, particularly amongst youth. It is certainly a very worthwhile project.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics produced some crime statistics last week. It produces a variety of excellent statistics. A lot of those statistics actually focus on comparing the states and the two territories. One of the issues with the Australian Bureau of Statistics when it releases its reports is that they are often not as timely as perhaps they could be. That is because it needs to collate information from the various Australian jurisdictions and it needs to be able to do an apples with apples comparison so it knows that the state-to-state comparisons are fair. The report released by the ABS last week covered the period 1 July 2016 to June 2017. Those statistics showed that WA had the highest number of offenders in terms of an increase—the largest increase in Australia. That was at five per cent. It was significantly higher than any other increase. That was against an Australia-wide trend of a decrease. WA also had the largest increase in the number of assault offences—going up 15 per cent. WA had proportionately more youth offenders, with 16 per cent of all offenders aged between 10 and 17, and drug offenders were the highest percentage in Australia. Drug offenders made up 25 per cent of all offenders in Western Australia.

Members might ask what the opposition’s response was. Quick as a flash, the member for Hillarys said in response —

Despite crime falling in the rest of Australia, in Western Australia violent crime has gone up, assaults have gone up ... so have drug offences and so have fraud and deception offences. That means every Western Australian is less safe than they were ...

He went on to field a few more questions. The question was put to him: “But, member, doesn’t this cover your period in office? Isn’t this the result of eight and a half years of you being in government? Don’t these figures cover your period, your failure—the failure of your police minister and your government?” These statistics came on the back of two of the worst years of crime rises in the history of this state.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** When are you going to publish the statistics?

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** There were double-digit increases in 2015 and 2016 after the introduction of the new policing model by the former government.

I will take the interjection from the member for Scarborough: when are we publishing the statistics? That was another crazy thing that the opposition did last week. Maybe it was just too many punches to the head, I do not know. Their so-called spokesman for accountability went on radio in the afternoon and said that the crime stats were not up. They were up. All he had to do was go onto the police website to read them. He could have read them.

Talk about own goals. We have had another own goal from the member for Scarborough today asking, “Where are the crime stats?” They have been up for over a week. The member for Hillarys said, “This is shocking. Crime is out of control.” It is a period of time based on their time in office. The member for Hillarys then proffered a reason why crime was out of control. He said it was because of the incoming government’s budget cuts. We brought down a budget in September last year—a period not even covered by the period of crime stats. Own goal there! There was another own goal from their so-called accountability spokesperson who continued to go on radio and say that stats were not up when they were.

In terms of our own police crime statistics, we know that in the last quarter of last year there were significant improvements in crime. Those have been reported in *The West Australian*. We saw a nine per cent decrease in overall reported offences between October and December 2017 when compared with the year before.